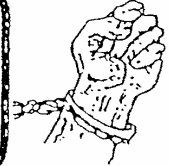




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SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE FOR ETHIOPIAN
POLITICAL PRISONERS (SOCEPP)



April 15/2008

VENGEFUL REGIME CONDEMNS DEAD MAN TO DEATH!

In Ethiopia, the judiciary is controlled by the ruling front /TPLF-EPRDF/ and what the Front orders becomes the verdict of the courts. In this vein, a number of Air Force officers of the former regime have been condemned to death on the alleged grounds that they have bombed villages in Tigray region /the home region of the present rulers of Ethiopia/.

Leaving aside the fact that the former regime let loose its air force on insurgents not only in Tigray but in many other regions too, including Eritrea, the EPRDF court has sentenced a dead officer to death in what has characterized the blind vengeful spirit of those in power. Air Force pilot Alemayehu Esatu was killed in a crash piloting a chartered plane in Nairobi. He was living in exile in Kampala and died in the early nineties. The death sentence passed on Air Force officers, most of them absent and in exile, was not based on proper legal procedure especially in the light of credible allegations that the Tigray front itself leaked that it would hold a public meeting in Hawzein and literally provoked the air attack on the town. The condemned officers were not defended by their chosen legal counsel or lawyers while the so called evidence against them was presented by the regime through its Stalin-era type public prosecutor. That it condemned a dead pilot to death is more than revealing of the travesty that characterizes any court proceeding under the ruling TPLF/EPRDF. In the particular case of the bombing of Hawzein, there is a credible case to be made against the ruling Tigrean front itself for "setting up the population for a bombing and hindering the people from fleeing into hiding when the spotter planes were first sighted". The TPLF/EPRDF dismantled the Ethiopian armed forces and it was dead set to destroy the much respected air force in order to debilitate and weaken Ethiopia as many have alleged. It was not able to put its hands on the veteran and experienced pilots and is reportedly now taking vengeful actions by condemning most of them to death. Including already dead pilots!

SOCEPP condemns this travesty of justice and mockery of the independence of the judiciary.

INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS INJUSTICE EVERYWHERE
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